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**BISHOP PORTEUS'S LETTER
TO THE INHABITANTS OF MAN-
CHESTER AND THE AD-
JACENT PARTS.**

[Concluded from page 133.]

If you have preserved a due sense of piety in your own minds, have you endeavoured to transfuse it into those of your children, your servants, your manufacturers? Their souls, as well as their bodies, are to a great degree in your hands. Have you been faithful to this trust, and consulted equally the welfare of both? Have you more especially given your children, not merely a learned, a prudent, a worldly education, but (what is of infinitely more importance both to your happiness and theirs, and yet is now most dreadfully neglected) a moral and a religious one? Have you made them early acquainted with their Maker and their Redeemer; and explained to them the connexion they have with another world? Is it on that world you have taught them to fix their hearts and affections, and have you been more anxious to instruct them in the means of securing an inheritance, there, than in the arts of amassing wealth, and acquiring distinction here? What is it that has been principal in your intentions,

and the ruling passion of your souls? For what purpose have you "risen early and taken rest late, and eat the bread of carefulness?"* Has it been solely to extend your trade, to accumulate fortunes, to multiply houses and villas, and to join field to field; or have you carried your views still farther, and entertained ideas of a far more noble and exalted nature? Have you opened a communication, and established a commerce, with those remote regions that lie beyond the grave, and made it your chief business to lay up treasures there, which no accidents can diminish, no prodigal heir can dissipate, or convert into instruments of his own destruction? Have you in all your various concerns, both at home and abroad, conducted yourselves on the strictest principles of justice and integrity, uprightness and fair-dealing; and if God has blessed your honest labours with success, have you paid, with cheerfulness and liberality, that tribute of beneficence which he requires at your hands, for the relief and comfort of your necessitous brethren?

These, my brethren, are all christian duties, they constitute the very life and soul of religion, and if in these you have been materially deficient, you have reason to thank God for exciting you in the manner

* Ps. cxxvii. 3.

he has done, to a juster sense, and a more exact performance of them. And you have the more reason to thank him, because in the "midst of judgment he has remembered mercy," because he "quickly turned his anger away, and would not suffer his whole displeasure to arise."* Had he permitted the shocks you felt to have continued a few minutes longer, you might have been involved in the same destruction which some years ago overwhelmed the unhappy city of Lisbon, and a great part of its inhabitants. Compare your own deliverance with that dreadful catastrophe, and then forbear if you can, to bless God from the bottom of your souls, for chastising and admonishing you with so gentle a hand. "As a man chasteneth his son, so has the Lord chastened you (not to consume, but only) to humble and prove you, and to do you good at your latter end."† "His anger endureth but a moment, and in his favour is life."‡ "In a little wrath I hid my face from thee for a moment, but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee, saith the Lord."§ Let not this kindness, I beseech you, be lost upon you. Your first terrors and apprehensions would gradually die away, and the little temporary reformation which they might possibly produce at the time, would vanish with them. But if the warmest sentiments of gratitude for your preservation do not remain deeply impressed upon your souls, and produce the most salutary effects on your hearts and lives, you will show yourselves to be utterly unworthy of the mercies you have received, and can have no reason to expect a repetition of them on any future occasion.

If this forbearance of God is despised, and this lenity abused, he may think it necessary to visit you with severer judgments. Take then the best, the only rational method to avert his future displeasure. Recommend yourselves to his favour, not merely by a sudden, transient fit of devotion, the abortive offspring of fear, but by a sincere, and fervent, and heart-felt piety; by consecrating the rest of your lives to the service of your Maker; by offering up yourselves, soul and body, as a reasonable, holy, and lively sacrifice unto him, *by doing justly, loving mercy, and keeping yourselves unspotted from the world.*"*

To all this let me entreat you to add moreover, that much neglected practice of family prayer. It is at all times a duty of high rank and importance; and in your present circumstances, after the admonitions you have so lately received, you cannot but perceive a peculiar propriety in it. You have seen, you have felt, with a force superior to all reasoning, that you are continually exposed to dangers and accidents which no human prudence can foresee or prevent; and that you stand in daily and hourly need of some superior aid, without which, the very ground you stand upon, firm and sure as it seems to be, may sink from under your feet, and overwhelm you and your possessions, the painful fruit of all your care and toil, in one common grave. You cannot then surely think it too much trouble, or too much waste of time, to spend a few minutes every day, not only in private, but with your whole house, in endeavouring to secure, by frequent and fervent prayer, the constant superintendence of a gracious Providence over you. It is

* Ps. lxxviii. 39.

† Deut. viii. 2, 5.

‡ Ps. xxx. 5.

§ Is. liv. 8.

* Micah vi. 8.—James i. 27.

greatly to your credit that as your towns have been enlarged and improved, your churches have also multiplied in the same proportion. In this you have shewn a very proper regard for the honour of God, and the decent celebration of divine worship. Go a little farther still in the demonstrations of your piety, and let every one of you make his own house "a house of prayer."* a temple fit for the Holy One to inhabit. It will cost you but little to do this. It will require no additional ornament to your dwellings, save those of a devout heart and a virtuous life. "And who then shall harm you, if you be thus followers of that which is good."† I do not say that no misfortune will then ever befall you. For even the most righteous of men must expect to taste sometimes the bitter cup of affliction. But you will have the very best security against the evils of life, and if they do overtake you, the best support under them that either this world or the next can give. You will be under the immediate inspection and care of that Almighty Being, who has the whole creation at his command, "who measures the waters in the hollow of his hand, and metes out the heavens with a span, and comprehends the dust of the earth in a measure, and weighs the mountains in scales, and the hills in a balance, and takes up the isles as a very little thing."‡ A Being such as this can never want the power, and we know well, that he never wants the will, to protect those that trust in him; from whom he will either avert every great and extraordinary disaster, or make it conduce ultimately to their good. If infidelity and irreligion have any more solid

comforts to offer you than these, they will deserve some attention. But if in the hand of God only you can think yourselves safe, if in the promises of the Gospel alone you find that sovereign remedy which composes all your fears, and gives rest to your souls, you can no longer doubt what course you have to take. Your first business is to render yourselves worthy (by a holy life and reliance on the merits of your Redeemer) of the divine protection; your next, to repose upon it with boundless confidence, and perfect tranquillity, "casting all your care upon God, because he careth for you."* Then may you say, even under the most alarming apprehensions—"God is our hope and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore, will we not fear, though the earth be moved, and though the hills be carried into the midst of the sea. The Lord is our light, and our salvation, whom then shall we fear? the Lord is the strength of our life, of whom then shall we be afraid?"†

To His gracious protection I earnestly recommend you, and remain
Your affectionate brother,
and servant in Christ,

B. CHESTER.

October 10, 1777.

CHAP. IX.

Of Atonement for Sin by the Death of Jesus Christ.

(Concluded from page 135.)

As the Socinians deny the Fall of Man, they cannot be consistent, without denying all its consequences; of which the doctrine of Atonement is one of the most considerable. And a doctrine it is, so plain and striking, that all mankind, who have had

* Is. lvi. 7.

† 1 Pet. iii. 13.

‡ Is. xi. 12, 15.

* 1 Pet v. 7. † Ps. xli. 1, 2, xxvii. 1.

any notion of God's purity, and their own guilt, have joined in the practice of offering sacrifices, to avert the wrath of invisible powers; thus giving universal testimony to that great principle of the Law and the Gospel, that without shedding of blood there is no remission. And this general attachment to the notion of expiation disposed the Gentiles to embrace the sacrifice of Christ, in whom they found that atonement, which they had all desired; and therefore the prophet scrupled not to call him the Desire of all nations. But, in this capacity, he is not desirable to the Socinians, who have found out another way of acceptance. They hold, that nothing is necessary, but mere repentance and moral reformation, on the part of sinners; and that God, on his part, is bound by his goodness, to forgive them, for nothing. But now, what are we to do with all those declarations of the Scripture which speak of Jesus Christ, as a sacrifice for Sin? In answer to which, I may venture to assure you, that the same ingenuity, which proves Jesus Christ to be no more than a man, can as easily prove, that he was no sacrifice. It is true, say they, he is called a sacrifice, but only in a figurative expression, as our prayers and praises are called sacrifices. His death was no sin-offering, but only an example of patient suffering for his religion; an example to us to suffer in like manner, if we are called upon; and this, says our author, in his canting way, was a noble sacrifice indeed. So that a noble sacrifice is no sacrifice at all. And now, my brethren, is not this a noble way of interpreting the Scripture? Christ died for our Sins: and what does it mean? Nothing at all. but that he died for his own religion! And, if we die in like manner, then we are as truly a sacrifice for him,

as he was for us. But what saith the Scripture? Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us. Did not the Passover and its blood stop the execution of that vengeance, which fell upon the Egyptians? If Christ then is our Passover, it must follow, that his blood now does for us, what the blood of the Paschal Lamb did for the Hebrews in Egypt: but that blood was expiatory, and carried redemption from death with it: and therefore so is his; according to that of St. Paul, We have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of our sins. Was the Passover an example to the Hebrews? Did it die for its own religion? No; its blood was accepted for the saving of the people of God, when the unbelieving were destroyed; and therefore Christ's blood as the great antitype before referred to, is accepted for the same end: otherwise he can be no Passover. Indeed, so false is it that Christ's sacrifice was figurative, that there never was any true and proper sacrifice, but his only. The blood of bulls, and of goats, and of lambs, which were offered daily, under the Law, and had the appearance of real sacrifices, could not accomplish what it aimed at: it could not purge the conscience from a sense of guilt: and to shew that it had not done so, those sacrifices were offered repeatedly, day by day, and year by year: but Christ offered himself once for all, and by that offering, perfected for ever them that are sanctified. With the merits of this sacrifice, he now appears, as our high Priest, in the presence of God, for us, as the high Priest of the Jews went into the most holy place of the Temple, once a year, with the blood of the yearly sacrifice. We are far from denying, that Christ was an example to us in his Death, as well as in his Life: but he was not only an example, as the

Socinian falsely asserts. He was an Intercessor, a Mediator, a temple, a Priest, a sacrifice, a ransom, a price of redemption, a propitiation, an atonement, a lamb slain for the sins of the world: he was, in short, all that the Law exhibited: and instead of being a sacrifice only in figure, all the sacrifices that had been before him, from the beginning of the world, were the figures, of which he himself, once for all, in the end of the world was the substance and reality.

If you wish to see the whole doctrine of atonement confirmed and explained in a single text, consider what the Apostle hath said, Heb. x. 26. 27. If we sin wilfully, after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment, and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries. This teaches us, that a fire from heaven is due to sinners, and must fall upon those sinners themselves, unless a sacrifice, exposing itself in their stead, shall turn away the indignation that awaits them. Christ is this sacrifice, accepted of God as our substitute: but, if we depart from our profession, despising the advantage of this substitution, then we can find no other sacrifice, but must receive the divine wrath in our own persons.

When God shall be revealed, as once on Mount Sinai, and that fiery indignation which is looked for, shall be falling upon the adversaries of the Gospel, then we shall see the necessity of this sacrifice for sin: and, if the sophistry of any seducer shall have tempted us to rely on some other method of salvation, we shall curse the hour, in which we listened to him.

CHAP. X.

Conclusion.

You are not to wonder, my brethren, either at the absurdity, or wickedness, of these attempts which are made upon your faith: the scripture hath told us, the time should come, when they will not endure sound doctrine, but be possessed with an itch of novelty: and, as numbers give credit to any false persuasion, it is natural for them to wish, that you may endure sound doctrine as little as they do. With this view, they take all possible pains for the propagation of their false opinions; which Dr. Priestley, in false English, calls the Spread of Truth. These opinions, as you have seen, are very flattering to human pride: and it is an old saying, that flatterers are easily believed. No deep reasoning is requisite, when the treachery of your own hearts assists them in their work; the success of which is farther promoted by the cheapness of their publications, which puts them into the hands of the lowest readers. O let not the husbandman go to sleep, while the enemy is thus diligent, and successful! You may judge, therefore, that your situation is dangerous; and when you are convinced of this, it is hoped, you will be on your guard. And now I have endeavoured, as my duty requires, to shew you what the enemies of your faith have to say, in one of their pieces; you may be able to judge of the rest for yourselves. So, for the present, I shall conclude with that advice of St. John—Beloved, believe not every Spirit, but try the Spirits, whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the World. 1 John iv. 1.

From Mason's Remains.

Consider that Christ alone, is your way to God; let Christ therefore be precious to your souls. Labour for true faith in him. Take him for your Lord and Saviour. Submit to his commands in all things, and rest your souls upon him alone, for reconciliation and peace with God. Open your heart to the motions of his Spirit; and be sure to improve his motions—follow his drawings, and, by no means, grieve him.

Be speedy in your repentance and diligent in your endeavours after holiness. While God is calling, Christ inviting, the gate of Heaven set open, the ministers of the word exhorting, and the spirit drawing, make haste and delay not.

Consider your life is but short, and altogether uncertain. To defer one day, may be to your everlasting undoing. When your life is once gone, it will be in vain to think of repenting. You shall then have no more sermons, no more offers of Christ and grace. God will be patient no more. One offer of grace refused, renders a sinner inexcusable, though God should never offer his mercy any more. O trifle not with your soul! Be not careless of eternal happiness. You have heaven and hell, life and death before you, and it depends upon your own choice, which shall be your portion. Choose life, and choose it speedily. And remember that you have but one life to choose it in. Trifle not away this moment upon which depends eternity.

Stand not upon a short labour, difficulty, self-denial, or suffering, for your eternal happiness. God would have you saved, Christ hath died for you, that you might be reconciled to God: He is interceding with the Father, for all grace and

mercy for you, if you refuse him not. O make haste to your Saviour, yield to all his demands and take him, as offered in the Gospel, in all his offices.

Endeavour to be truly and thoroughly religious, and be not discouraged at the difficulties of it. God's grace shall be sufficient for your help; his promises shall be your sweet encouragement. The trouble and pains of religion shall be but short, and your reward shall be glorious and eternal. "Our light afflictions, that are but for a moment, shall work out for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." "And the sufferings of this present life are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed."

Choose then God for your portion, and remember that he is the only happiness of a rational and immortal soul. The soul, that was made for God, can find no happiness but in God; it came from God, and can never be happy but by returning to him again, and resting in him. Get him for your portion, and you have all. Then you have infinite wisdom to direct you, infinite knowledge to teach you, infinite mercy to pity and save you, infinite love to care for and comfort you, and infinite power to protect and keep you.

From Dr. Jortin's Discourses.

Towards the latter part of the fourth century, an infinite number of people used to go and visit the holy places in Palestine, and this caused the works of Origen to be known in the west. Rufinus, a presbyter of Aquileia, imbibed the sentiments of Origen, and returning to Italy, spread them every where, by translating divers books of this father. It was from Rufinus, that Pelagius,

and Cœlestius his pupil, learned at Rome those doctrines for which they were afterwards condemned.

Pelagius was every where accused of denying altogether the assistance of grace. He therefore wrote a book on free will, in which he acknowledged six kinds of grace, one kind of which is thus represented by him: I hold that grace consists not only in the law of God, but in the assistance of God. He assists us by his doctrine and revelation, by opening the eyes of the mind, by showing us things future, that the things present may not have dominion over us, by discovering to us the snares of the devil, and by illuminating us with divers and ineffable gifts of his heavenly grace.

St. Augustin accused Pelagius, not of having absolutely denied grace, but of having denied the necessity of it.

Never was there a dispute more embarrassed than this. Each party being pressed by some troublesome consequence, endeavoured to show the difficulty by using terms to which they gave a sense different from that which their adversaries ascribed to the same words. Thus the word grace, did not signify the same thing with Pelagius, as with Augustin, and the latter gave the name of *liberty* to that which is not usually so called. Many are of opinion, that if we carefully examine the words, which have been most used in this controversy, and the ideas which have been annexed to them, we shall hardly find one of these ideas to be clear and distinct.* Some words

* These remarks may, with equal propriety, be applied to many of our modern controversies, to much that has been said in support of the doctrines of Calvin; to the miserable attempts to prove, that if divine grace when offered, be not irresistible, God is not omnipotent; and still more to the paltry sophistry to which some of the English divines have had recourse, in order to induce a belief, that those who, with the church, hold that baptism is regeneration, deny the necessity of a change of heart to be wrought by the Holy Spirit. If all di-

will be found, which have absolutely no meaning at all; so that, in some parts of this dispute, the contenders might be compared to a Frenchman and an Arabian, each of them knowing only his mother's tongue, who should bawl in their turns as loud as they were able, and sometimes both at once, without understanding one another, and then boast that they had confuted their adversary. It is to be feared, that christians will continue to pursue the same methods, of disputing about the means and helps to obtain moral goodness, without studying to practice the thing itself.

Thomas Aquinas, in the year 1265, composed a body of divinity, which was in great vogue, at that time, and in the following centuries, till the reformation. Thomas held absolute predestination, and Luther, who in his youth had studied his system, retained this doctrine. Calvin entered into the same sentiments, and was a follower of Augustin. The Calvinists have generally adhered to Calvin's system, but the Lutherans, in this point, departed from their master. Erasmus scrupled not to censure the Augustinian doctrines; in which, as in many other things, he did eminent service to religion. The divines of the Church of Rome were divided. About this time, there sprung up in England a set of people called *Gos-*

divines were divines indeed, and content to know no more of religion than is to be found in the Bible, how much of distraction and confusion, and downright billingsgate in the church, would be thereby prevented. But scholastic divines, and divines who are but sciolists in divinity, are among the greatest pests which can infest any christian people. The latter possess themselves of a small stock of cant phrases to which they affix no definite meaning, but constantly press them into service, and all are heretics, and unconverted men, and mere moral preachers, who do not use the same words, and in the same sense, that they do. If we are to believe some christians, there can be no repentance, conversion, or renewing of the Holy Ghost, if baptism be regeneration. This change of heart must be regeneration, or it is no change at all, the scriptures and the church to the contrary notwithstanding. "It is all one, to go to work to draw these men out of their mistakes, who have no settled notions, as to dispossess a vagrant of his habitation who has no settled abode."

pellers. They thought that if they magnified Christ much, and depended on his merits and intercession, they could not perish which way soever they led their lives; reckoning, that since every thing was decreed, and the decrees of God could not be frustrated, therefore men were to leave themselves to be carried by those decrees. This drew some into great impiety of life, and others into desperation. Luther changed his mind about it, and Melancton openly wrote against it—But Calvin was still for maintaining the doctrine of these decrees. only he warned the people not to think much of them, since they were secrets which men could not penetrate into. Hooper, and many other good writers, did often dehort the people from entering into these *curiosities* (See Burnet's History of the Reformation.)

It is to be feared, that those notions will prevail once more, and that we shall again be plagued with a sect of *gospellers*. To reason with such persons signifies little. *Reason*, as well as *learning*, is what they shun and disregard, and to all your arguments they will expose their own *feelings and experiences*. All that remains is, to caution and exhort those, who have not caught the infection, and to try if we can in some measure serve and secure the next generation.

In England, at the time of the synod of Dort, there was much division of opinion concerning the controverted articles; but the divines of the church have taken the liberty to think and judge for themselves; and it hath come to pass, that from that time to this,* almost all per-

sons here, of any note for learning and abilities, have bid adieu to Calvinism, and have left the Fatalists to follow their own opinions, and to rejoice (since they can rejoice) in a religious system, consisting of human creatures without liberty, doctrines without sense, faith without reason, and a God without mercy.

Hints on Public Worship.

The daily service of our church opens with several passages of the Holy Scripture, one or more of which the minister is directed to use. These are designed to prepare the heart for Divine worship; and what can be so well adapted to answer this end as portions of the word of God from whom only the preparation of the heart in man can proceed? The tendency of the passages of Scripture here selected is, either to afford comfort to the fearful, (Ps. li. 9, cxliii. 2. Jer. x. 24) direction to the doubtful, (Ps. li. 17. Dan. ix. 9. Luke xv. 18, 19.) instruction to the ignorant, (1 John i. 8, 9. Ezek. xviii. 27.) admonition to the careless, (Ps. li. 3. Matt. iii. 3.) or caution to the formal, (Joel ii. 13.) They are adapted to produce humiliation under a conviction of our sins—faith in the declarations and promises of God's mercy through Christ—spirituality and love, mixed with reverence and fear, in our approaches to the majesty of heaven and our addresses to the mercy-seat. These sentences are pronounced by the minister without being repeated by the people. The people are to listen to them as to the word of God, praying inwardly that the tempers intended to be produced, may prevail in their own souls and throughout the whole congregation assembled for the worship of God.

* Dr. Jortin's time. Of late years the Church of England has had its Calvinistic divines. They have been called, not indeed *Gospellers*, but "the Evangelical Clergy." A recent event has somewhat alarmed and distressed them, and they now seem disposed to be less exclusive in their pretensions.

The sentences are followed by an exhortation, which is also to be pronounced by the minister alone, and not repeated by the people. It is an address from him to them. The work to which the people are exhorted is confession of their sins, the necessity of which has been proved by the preceding passages of Scripture. Of this necessity the exhortation again reminds the congregation, and it tells them also in what manner sin is to be confessed. A humble, lowly, penitent and obedient heart is essential to it; that is, a deep sense of sin, lively sorrow for it, and resolutions to fight against it, must accompany our acknowledgments of our guilt and vileness. We are also reminded that, while a contrite heart becomes us at all times, it must in an especial manner be cherished when we come before the throne of grace to obtain pardon for our sins.

In the confession that succeeds, every member of the congregation is to follow the minister, not only with a pure or honest heart, but also with a humble voice. For as all have sinned, each one is to acknowledge it for himself. In this part of worship the advantage of a form seems peculiarly evident; for surely every sinner's own lips should be employed in revealing his own guilt. And what is it that we confess?—That we have sinned against God,—that the devices and desires of our hearts are evil, “only evil continually,” (Gen. vi. 5.) and that we have followed them. And then, after having acknowledged our offences, we sum up all by saying, “there is no health in us.” This is fully evident from what we have before confessed. For if our hearts be altogether corrupt, and if all our conduct has been a stream from this polluted fountain—fruit from this

bad tree; surely there can be no spiritual health in us. Now if we feel what we here confess, then and then only, are we in a suitable frame of mind for coming before the throne of Him who hath said, “A broken and a contrite heart I will not despise.” Without this the finest words, the humblest posture of body, and the most constant attendance on the forms of Divine Worship will avail nothing towards obtaining acceptance with God.

The prayer of confession is followed by the absolution, which the minister in the name of God, and by the authority of his word, is to pronounce, while the people remain on their bended knees to receive the joyful declaration. In this the congregation has no part, but to listen, to receive the glad tidings into their hearts, and to adore with solemn awe and lively gratitude the author of the inestimable blessing. They are to remain silent, not repeating the words after the minister, but devoutly meditating on the grace of their offended God, who by his authorised servant mercifully declares his forgiveness of all them that be penitent, and on the love of Jesus Christ their Saviour, who by his precious blood-shedding hath procured that forgiveness for them. They are to mix faith with what they hear, considering the declaration made by God's minister, built on the word of God, as if God were Himself declaring the forgiveness of all their sins by a voice from heaven. Then will they feel an anxious desire to please Him, and that the rest of their lives may be pure and holy, so that at the last they may come to his eternal joy, through Jesus Christ their Lord. It cannot fail to strike the attentive reader how irreverent with respect to God the object of all our acts of

worship, and how injurious to themselves, is the too common practice of many persons in coming late to the house of God, perhaps after the confession of sin has been made, and the declaration of absolution pronounced. Those who thus habitually and wilfully absent themselves from these important parts of the service, can feel neither the necessity of confession, nor their need of forgiveness. Every part of Divine Worship is important, and none more so than confession of sin; and surely it becomes us as creatures and sinners—it is a duty which we owe to God, ourselves and our fellow-worshippers, to take our places in his house before the service begins, (unless we are prevented by absolute necessity) in order that our minds may be composed and prepared for the solemn work of the sanctuary, and that others may not be distracted in their devotions by our means.

After the absolution the minister repeats the Lord's Prayer, in which all the people are to join with their voices as well as their hearts. If they have received, in the exercise of repentance and faith, the declaration of forgiveness in the absolution, they may now with confidence cry, "Abba, Father." They are taught to do so by the Son of his love, who prescribed this form of prayer for their use. They may be sure that what they here ask for is according to the will of God, because he who lay in the bosom of the Father hath taught them "thus to pray." We are thus assured that our requests agree with his intercession. There is nothing that any individual or the whole church can want, that is not included in this comprehensive prayer.

The Lord's prayer is followed by two short petitions taken from the

Psalms. (Ps. li. 15. lxx. 1) which are to be used while all still continue on their knees. Then all standing up join in the usual doxology and hallelujah. These supply a part for the minister and people to perform alternately. There is in these short addresses a sweetness and energy, which every devout mind must feel. These ejaculations contain the essence of true devotion. And while they ascend in the spirit of faith, the mind is prepared to join in ascribing Glory to the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, and to add Hallelujah, the Lord's name be praised. If the heart be duly affected by these expressions of prayer and praise, the voice will join aloud in the parts assigned to it.

The Apostle St. Paul exhorts us to "admonish one another in Psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in our hearts to the Lord." (Eph. v. 19. Col. iii. 15.) This our church leads her members to do in the use of the 95th Psalm. The minister and people are to read it aloud in alternate verses. If our hearts accompany our lips, we shall taste before hand the joys of heaven, and know that we are forming one chorus with saints and angels before the throne of glory. The use of this Psalm is a general preparation for those that follow.

This hymn of praise is succeeded by the daily portion of the psalms of David, the verses of which are also to be read by the minister and people alternately. After these Psalms the doxology or hymn of glory to each person in the Godhead is repeated. The daily use of these inspired Psalms will appear wise to all those who understand them. For whatever we read in other parts of the Bible as matter of doctrine or history, is here reduced to practice

and becomes our own. In other parts of the Scriptures repentance and faith are described—in reading the Psalms, we ourselves use the language of repentance and faith. Elsewhere we learn how others served God;—here we serve him ourselves. The Psalms contain the truths of religion adapted to the purposes of devotion. With this view the Psalms have been read from the early ages in the assemblies of the faithful. Every devout mind will find them suited to its own taste.

The Psalms for the day are followed by the first lesson, taken from the Scriptures of the Old Testament, which together with the New were “given by inspiration of God, and are profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.” (2 Tim. iii. 16, 17.) It is the grand excellence of our church that so large a portion of the pure word of God is in daily use in her offices. During this part of the service the congregation is directed to sit, as they have no part to act but to wait for instruction from the word and Spirit of God. It looks well when people bring their Bibles as well as their Prayer Books to church with them; and in order more effectually to secure their attention, follow the minister as he is reading the word of God. Happily the poor as well as the rich may now be furnished with this invaluable treasure, since Christian charity by the means of various societies which issue the Bible, has placed it within their reach. Let every one lift up his heart in prayer to God, that, as he hath “caused all holy Scriptures “to be written for our learning,” we may be enabled so to “read, hear, mark, learn, and inwardly digest them,

that by patience and comfort of his holy word, we may embrace and ever hold fast the blessed hope of everlasting life, which he hath given us in our Saviour Jesus Christ.” He must “open our understandings that we may understand the Scriptures,” or they will prove to us a sealed book.

[To be continued.]

For the Repository.

I have already given an account of the *persecutions* which the Rev. Mr. M —, had to endure in Philadelphia, and of the wrongs of which he complained. The passages of his letter, which have been extracted, will give some insight into his character, and his own account of his grievances. Some passages from Archbishop Secker’s answer to the reverend gentleman’s complaints of grievances, will close the account of this schism in the church.

“You say, that it (the Bishop’s refusal) was procured by God knows what art and low cunning—that several letters were sent to him, as if from the vestry and parishioners, recommending strongly Mr. Sturgeon and Mr. Duche, as assistant ministers, and desiring that you might be dismissed. That this fallacy, this unparalleled piece of perfidy, will be laid before me in a fair and reputable manner. Now I cannot learn upon enquiry, that any one such letter was written to the Bishop, as from the vestry and parishioners. And if any was written by others, they might at least have as good a right to remonstrate against you to him, as you have to remonstrate against the American clergy in general, to me. What you mean, therefore, by charging any persons with *unparalleled perfidy*, or even with *fallacy*, on this occasion, I cannot guess. Forsurely you have not poor Dr Jenney in view, who can only be charged

with weakness, and that in your favour. He granted you the occasional use of his pulpit, with great reluctance of mind, being, he says, much solicited; but others say, terrified by the violence of your party. Now, considering how excessively angry you are apt to be when any thing is charged upon you, surely you ought to be very careful, and exhort those whom you have taken under your direction, to be very careful never to charge others at random.

You say, that you are cruelly, and unwarrantably thrust out of the church, meaning Dr. Jenney's. Now, from what he and others have said, I rather conceive that cruel and unwarrantable steps were taken to thrust you into it.

He, (the Bishop,) saith, that your extemporary praying and preaching are not agreeable to the canons. "Before sermon the minister shall move the people to join with him in prayer, in the form, or to the effect there expressed." And if instead of that, he makes a long prayer, or one in a different form, or to a different effect, he disobeys the canon; and from such disobedience very great mischiefs have arisen in the church, and may again. Next to such liberties taken in prayer, those of extempore sermons are dangerous, unless the preacher be very prudent and mild in his temper. For the passions of preachers hurry them to say things which it may be hoped they would not, were they to consider them previously. Or at least their discourse being written by them, would testify concerning itself.

Dr. Jenney asserts, and the vestry admits, that you have used "railings and reviling in the pulpit, and boldly and indiscriminately aspersed the whole body of our church and clergy, their doctrines and principles,

their lives and writings"—and made disturbances ever since you were admitted. As the governors of the parish saw your behaviour in this light, what could they do less than forbid your preaching again, till the Bishop's pleasure should be known?

Suppose that a number of your parishioners, not being able to carry their favourite point, should break off from your church, and set up another, would you think this right also? Let your conscience speak. Your adherents desire me, that they may not be stigmatized with the opprobrious names of Schismatics, Separatists, &c. &c. I am not disposed to give harsh names; but indeed I can give no good one to such practices as those. If persons may withdraw from a congregation, of which they are members, merely because they cannot get some person, whom they have in admiration, how many pretences for withdrawing may they and others make with equal reason; and what end can there be to divisions and confusions?

Your followers profess great zeal for the peace of the church, and you profess great grief that it is wounded, and declare, that you will strictly adhere, not only to the liturgy and doctrines, but to the discipline of the church. Pray, Sir, consider—Can you adhere to the discipline of the church, whilst you act in defiance of the Bishop, the minister of the parish, and the vestry, on principles that tend to the dissolution of all churches, and the subversion of all ecclesiastical order? How could such an imagination come into your mind? And how can you request me to countenance such proceedings? But it seems that you have a further and much mightier plea to make. You affirm, that the doors are shut against you for teaching the doctrines of the gospel, and intimate

that you are required to cease from preaching a crucified Christ, though the Bishop had given you power to do it, and though you had solemnly promised at your ordination, that you would do it, and would banish all strange doctrines. But consider, the power given you was, to "preach the word of God," in the congregation "where you should be lawfully appointed thereunto." And why could not your promise have been as well, and better performed, in Virginia, where you might have been lawfully appointed? On what grounds do you affirm that the doors are shut against you for teaching the doctrines of the gospel? I hope you do not account your bishop an enemy to them. You are not charged in any letter to him, nor in Dr. Jenney's letter, with false tenets, but with railing accusations. And of this charge, you have, in your letter to me, gone a great way towards proving yourself guilty.

By calling yourself the Preacher of the Articles, you seem to consider yourself the only preacher of them in that church. Accordingly your followers say, that excluding you, forces them to hear men, whose doctrines not being agreeable to the Articles of the Church, cannot please, nor their lessons convey instruction. Now they made no such complaint of their ministers before. You must probably have been, as Dr. J's letter represents you to be, the accuser of your brethren. You say one door hath been shut against you, but God hath opened another. But he permits many unjustifiable things to be done.

You are "still followed by a multitude of people of all denominations." Now, few, or none of these can have been witnesses to what hath been transacted chiefly in vestries and letters; but must have ta-

ken up with reports; in spreading of which the ignorant and the partial are usually the busiest and the loudest.

I am very sensible that a minister of the gospel should have good report of them, which are without. But mere opinion, I apprehend, would not excite in the breasts of dissenters of all sorts, at once, so very warm a zeal in favour of a minister of the church, as they are said to show at present, without his taking some undue methods of courting them, or their hoping to gain some advantage to their common interest, by such behaviour. Those several sects, differing so widely from us, and from one another, cannot all of them approve your doctrines, and therefore it is not for your doctrines, that they applaud you. I would not think uncharitably of any of them; but I cannot help remarking how much more charity your followers have for them, than for the ministers and members of the church. The latter they suspect to do every thing from a wrong principle; the former, they are clear, do every thing from a right one. But is it not very natural to imagine, that a large proportion of these multitudes may flock after you, solely from an idle curiosity, and fondness of novelty? And that more than a few may encourage you, because they promise themselves, that dividing our church will weaken if not overturn it? Ought you not to suspect your own cause, for being supported by them, instead of glorying in that support? Which is the more probable presumption of the two—that you are wrong, or that all the rest of the clergy are?

I trust that none of our clergy in America are such in point of doctrine, as you make the generality of

them to be. But of this, I am sure, that the contrary ought to be presumed concerning them all. That it appears concerning several of them from what they have written; and that since we are directed by the Apostle, "against an Elder, receive not an accusation, but before two or three witnesses," we ought not to receive an accusation, much less so improbable an accusation, against the Elders of a whole country, on the credit of one witness, especially of one who has so much need to be reminded of the same Apostle's other direction—"Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you."

My deliberate judgment upon the whole is, that you ought not to have made the separation which you have done; but to have quitted Philadelphia, when the Bishop's refusal of a license came; first begging pardon for the uneasinesses which you have stirred up there. This, I am fully satisfied, was your christian duty. Whether it would have been worldly wisdom also, time will show, I do not take upon me to prognosticate. But possibly some who have been hurried into subscribing, may change their minds before they have paid much of their money. Or, supposing the church built, or the liberty of using the state house continued, what is no longer new, may fail, after a while, to draw the expected numbers together; your singularities, and your intemperate heat, may gradually disgust such as once were pleased with them, and they who delight in you now as an instrument of making breaches in our church, may come to slight you when the work is done, or when you have miscarried in it, whichsoever may happen. So after doing much harm, you may be laid aside, or

little regarded, and wish even for the sake of your temporal interest, that you had gone and settled in a regular manner, where you were invited.

But for the sake of an infinitely more important interest, I beg you would consider the solemn promise which you have made, "reverently to obey your Bishop, and other chief ministers, to whom the charge and government over you is committed," and to maintain and set forwards, as much as in you lieth, quietness, peace and love, amongst all christian people. But if you turn a deaf ear to this entreaty, I must then beg your followers, for whose perusal, as well as yours, this letter is intended, to remember and observe St. Paul's rule—"Mark them, which cause divisions and offences, and avoid them."

As I have written these things, if I know my own heart, in the spirit of meekness, I hope you will read them with the same; and not be kindled by them into that "wrath of man" which "worketh not the righteousness of God." Part of them, I am sensible, must give you pain. But "faithful are the wounds of a friend," and I am very sorry that you have allowed me no other way of approving myself your sincere friend."

From the Reasonable Communicant.

Parishioner—When I have received the sacrament, I suppose I shall return home full of joy and consolation, assured of God's favour, the forgiveness of my sins, and everlasting happiness.

Minister—This may not be—One may be in God's favour without being assured of it; one may have his sins forgiven, without knowing or believing it; nay, may be hereafter everlastingly happy in the kingdom of

God, though miserable and desponding here. But in this you may be satisfied, that if you truly repent of your sins, they will certainly be forgiven, and you shall certainly be happy in the world to come. But whether you shall have the comfort of believing your sins forgiven, at such a time, at or after receiving the sacrament, is not quite so sure. No such joy or consolation is annexed by any promise of God, to the worthy reception of the blessed Sacrament. The benefits are indeed secured by God's promise to the worthy receiver, whence that joy may reasonably result; but the party may, by some indisposition of mind, not be filled with it. And let me now advise you, not to expect, and by no means to depend upon such consolations. If they follow it, it is well; if not, there is no harm nor danger in the want of them. Prepare yourself by true and sincere repentance, and come with faith, and as well disposed as you can, and leave the rest to God, you will have the satisfaction of having done your duty in the best manner you could, and with that you must be content; for the rest is not in your power. I have known many good people disconsolate upon this occasion, by being disappointed of such expectations as their warm imaginations had raised in them, without any reason or promise made on God's part. They came away cold, and little affected, from the Sacrament, when they thought their hearts must have been filled with devout transports; and because of this they fell into deep concern, and believed they had not prepared themselves as they ought to have done; although upon examining their hearts, they could not justly charge themselves with any considerable omissions or negligence in that work. And there-

fore be not discouraged, if you find not that content and pleasure, after your coming from the sacrament, which you may hope and wish for before. Go on steadily in the ways of virtue, and do your christian duties constantly; and whether you feel the sensible warmth and comforts of religion or not, yet you shall never want at length the just rewards of it. The former depend upon uncertainties, the latter upon God's goodness and truth, which cannot fail.

Advice to Young Persons.

The following advice is taken from one of the pieces circulated by "The Society for promoting Christian Knowledge."

As to your religious deportment, never omit your morning and evening prayers, and when upon your knees, keep your mind intent upon Almighty God, to whom you pray. Cultivate such purity of mind, as may render you acceptable to God. Blush in secret at any thought that religion condemns. Whatever your company may be, take care not to offend against modesty by any word or action, and avoid giving any smile of approbation, when words of a double meaning are spoken; you may justly conclude that such words come from a bad heart. If you have an opportunity of attending family prayers, be thankful to God for it, and by your constant and ready attendance, show that you esteem it a blessing. Let it be the delight of your life to attend, as often as you possibly can, Divine worship in your parish church. You should always consider that God's eye is continually upon you, that no darkness or privacy can hinder him from being a concerned spectator, but more especially in his place of Divine worship; therefore let your behaviour

there be grave, serious and devout, and take care to be present before service begins.

Having been confirmed, and at that time in the presence of God, taken upon you to perform the three things promised in your name, when you were baptized, that is to renounce the Devil and all his works, to believe the articles of the christian faith, and keep God's commandments; you are required by your christian profession to omit no opportunities of coming to the sacrament of the Lord's Supper. You are exhorted not to give way to the suggestions of your spiritual enemy, by any plea for neglecting that holy ordinance.

The Devil would keep us all from doing our duty to God, if he could. This is his constant employment. But do you resolve to be God's servant, and then you will enjoy perfect freedom of mind in this life, and endless felicity in the next. You are of age to judge and act for yourself, and not only to discern good and evil, but to apprehend the great doctrines of christianity, particularly of Jesus Christ being the Saviour of sinners, and only mediator between God and man, in memory of whom, and with a design more effectually to engage his disciples to love, imitate and obey him, this holy sacrament was instituted. This holy ordinance was intended to promote a spirit of piety, and the practice of all goodness in the Communicants. You will soon find the advantages and pleasure of a constant performance of all religious duties, in a greater composure of your passions, a more exact regularity in your conversation, a better disposition of mind, more seriousness, prudence and success, by the blessing of God, in the common affairs of life.

Extract.

Bishop Horne, says Skinner, was careful to guard us against that vain pretension to learning, which makes some men affect to be wise in matters of religion "above what is written," while at the same time he was equally careful to withhold every encouragement from that enthusiastic notion, so fondly cherished by others of a different description, who imagine themselves sure of salvation, for no other reason but because they are ignorant and unlearned. Both these extremes must be equally avoided, and there cannot be much difficulty in drawing the line, between that proud display of learning, which looks down with contempt on the simplicity of the Gospel, and the no less presumptuous ignorance, which foolishly regards all its inward feelings and imaginary assurance, as certain proofs of a saving faith, though unaccompanied with any true knowledge of the ground, on which that faith is built.

Extract.

The faithful monitor is always regarded by the wicked as a troublesome intruder, and as the enemy of his quiet. Even conscience itself is thus dreaded, and the guilty wretch endeavours, by every method he can devise, to escape from her remonstrances, and to harden himself against her denunciations. But the voice of judgment will, at last be heard, conviction must at some time or other pierce through the avenues of the heart; and fear and terror will in the end produce either terror or despair.

The Convention of the P. E. Church of Maryland,

Will meet in Baltimore on the 31st of May, being the first Wednesday after Trinity Sunday.